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RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 8159
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2907
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 2063
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5977
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2378
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20, 2007

In Today's Papers

Dutch ING Bank Purchases OYAK Bank

Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Zaman, and others: A Netherlands based ING Group has reached an agreement with OYAK, the Turkish Armed Forces Pension Fund, to buy OYAK bank for \$2.7 billion. Under the terms of the agreement, OYAK Bank will change its name within one year of the completion of the sale process. Mainstream Milliyet reports that after the sale of OYAK Bank to ING Bank, foreigners will acquire control of 25.4% of the Turkish banking sector. Tabloid Aksam says in return that foreign capital in the Turkish banking sector will reach 42% after the sale of OYAK bank.

Hudson Institute Rejects Controversial Scenarios

Milliyet, Radikal, Yeni Safak, Aksam, and others: Hudson Institute Turkey expert, Zeyno Baran, issued a written statement rejecting allegations that disaster scenarios were discussed at a meeting organized by the Institute in the U.S.. Mainstream Milliyet says Baran apologized for any inconvenience caused by reports on the scenarios that they discussed, such as the assassination of former Constitutional Court President Tulay Tugcu. However, Milliyet was not convinced by the denial and published the copy of the invitation sent by Baran with her signature on it and some of the alleged scenarios attached to it.

The NSC will Convene Today

Milliyet, Cumhuriyet, Hurriyet: The NSC will convene today to discuss increasing terrorist incidents, election security, and measures to be taken against PKK terrorists. Mainstream Hurriyet reports that a high level official said that the visit to Turkey of Iraqi PM, Maliki, as well as the establishment of a joint buffer zone along the Iraq border will also be taken up at the meeting. Meanwhile, mainstream Milliyet reports that a group of 105 AKP deputies who were not nominated as candidates for July 22 general elections, issued a declaration before the NSC meeting saying that they promise to attend a Parliamentary session where PKK terrorism will be discussed. Observers say that the declaration aimed to

eliminate the pretexts to the effect that Parliament cannot be convened due to disgruntled deputies even if NSC suggests the convening of Parliament.

Secretary Rice Urges Zebari to Cooperate with Turkey

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Sabah, Yeni Safak: Speaking after talks in Washington with Iraqi Foreign Minister, Hoshyar Zebari, Secretary Rice said that the United States and Iraqi Governments are both opposed to terrorists using Iraqi territory for terrorist actions against neighboring Turkey. Rice stated that the work of the trilateral security mechanism that Turkey, the U.S., and Iraq instituted against the PKK should be accelerated.

Meanwhile, all papers report that one soldier was killed at a terrorist attack in the Black Sea province of Gumushane. In the operations started after the terrorist attack, three terrorists were killed. In Erzincan, gendarmerie stopped a suspicious truck trying to enter the city center. In the clashes between the gendarmerie and the 13 PKK terrorists in the truck, five soldiers were injured and four terrorists were killed. Gendarmerie managed to capture two terrorists, one of them injured. Security forces stopped a lynching attempt by the people against the injured terrorist. Huge amounts of ammunition were found in the truck. The officials said that the terrorists might have been planning to reach the Black Sea coast for attacks there or were planning a big attack in Erzincan; they will be able to get information about the terrorists' action plan from the injured terrorist.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Situation in Palestine

"About Palestine"

Yilmaz Oztuna commented in the conservative daily, Turkiye (6/20):
" Hamas gained control over Gaza and became a neighbor to its two

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major enemies, Israel and Egypt. Given the nature of accusations exchanged between the two Palestinian groups, Al Fatah and Hamas, such as being an Israeli agent or being a murderer of Arabs, one wonders how they will succeed to save Palestine from Israel. The Shiite nature of Hamas also demonstrates the Iranian influence on Palestine. The Iranian President managed to infiltrate right next door to Israel with Hamas' control of Gaza. We should realize that Hamas is a terrorist organization, and like the PKK is for Turkey, Hamas is for Israel and the US. The situation in Palestine will get even worse if Al Qaeda manages to gain control over Palestinian groups. The impact of such development will be big enough to overshadow the Iraq issue. Regardless of the developments, peace in Palestine seems like a distant future."

"Ankara's View on Palestine"

Sami Kohen wrote in the mainstream daily, Milliyet (6/20): "The two Palestinian groups are in competition with each other as well as hostile towards each other. The future will be shaped through the policies of the two groups' respective leadership and also through the policies applied by international community. Western strategists hope to strengthen the Abbas administration by providing aid. Once West Bank citizens feel comfortable, they hope to restart the Middle East Peace Process. During that time, the Hamas administration will be isolated. Turkey is once again showing that it views Palestine differently than the Western world. Turkish officials believe that this strategy will not produce any results and may even backfire. A Turkish official explaining Ankara's approach to the issue, highlighted that an isolation policy will only increase the suffering of the people in Gaza and will radicalize the Hamas administration even more. Ankara believes that the solution lies in finding ways for reconciliation of the two Palestinian sides."

TV Highlights
NTV (6 A.M.)

Domestic News

- DP Leader, Mehmet Agar, started his party's election campaign from Aydin
- In an address to people in Agri, PM Erdogan urged people not to vote for independent candidates because this would mean a wasting of votes
- 4,000 people marched in Duzce yesterday to denounce terrorism
- Main opposition party, CHP, has filed a second petition for the annulment of presidential election reforms

International News

- A truck bomb detonated outside a Shiite mosque in Baghdad yesterday, killing 78 people and injuring more than 200
- A missile attack targeted at a militant training base killed at least 32 pro-Taliban militants on Tuesday in a Pakistani tribal region near the border
- President Bush and Israeli PM Olmert agreed to support Palestinian President, Abbas, in his battle against Hamas

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